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Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland, PA 18966.

TRAINWATCHING QUESTION: Have you ever been frustrated by picking bad times for train watching? To help railfans, a new 24 page booklet has just been published containing charts and data on two class A railroads as a case example. Various charts consider activity during the day, time of week, percentages, and more for two months at a single location. "Case Data For Train Watchers" for only $1.25. David D. Croteau, Dept. TW111Z, P.O. Box 1016, Colton, California 92324.

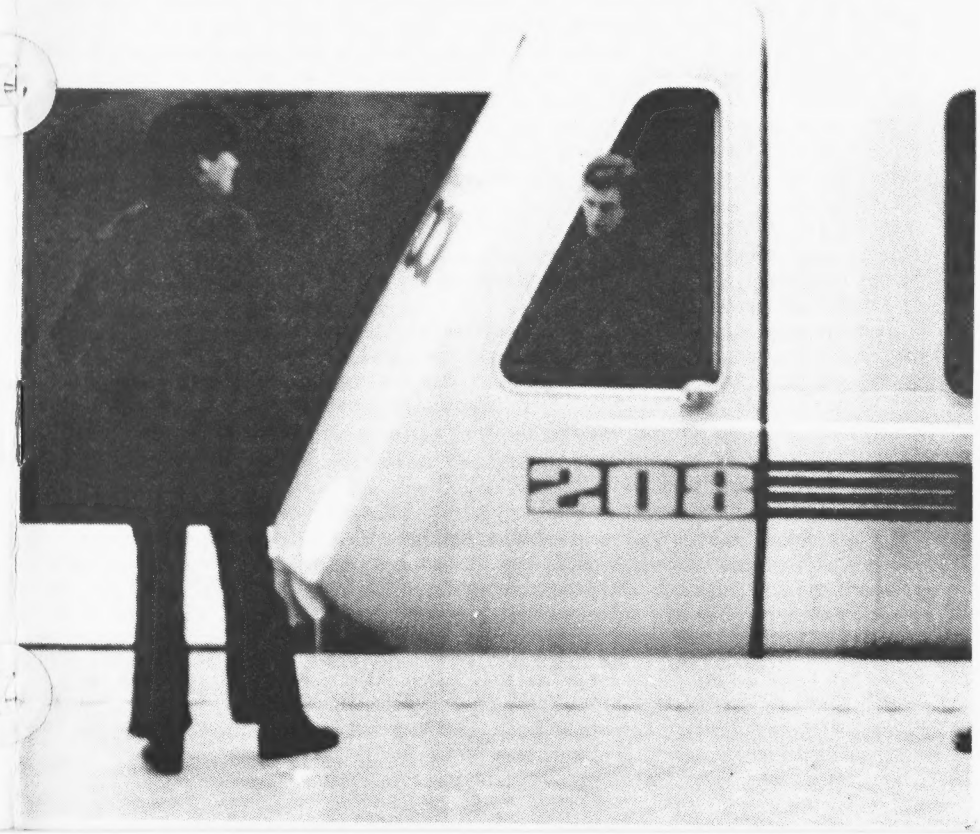
SPOKANE PORTLAND & SEATTLE Technical Society quarterly newsletter contains information for all persons interested in the SP&S. Areas of the newsletter include History, motive power, equipment, modeling the SP&S, equipment diagrams, current info on former SP&S line and equipment, passenger operation and equipment. $4.00 yearly. SP&S Technical Society, 95 Smull Avenue, West Caldwell, NJ 07006.

HOW TO ADVERTISE IN THIS NEWSLETTER: EXPRESS ADS (80 typewriter characters and spaces per line) cost just 25¢ per line (minimum $1). DISPLAY ADS: $10 full page (5x8 inches); half page $5; quarter page $2.50; eighth page $1.25 (prices are for camera-ready copy--final size, black ink; extra charge for reductions, enlargements, halftone preparation). Send remittance with orders under $10 to: Message Media, Dept. RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709.

RAIL TRAVEL newsletter

25¢

VOL. 3 NO. 22
SECOND ISSUE OF
NOVEMBER 1973
#72



ON THE COVER:

A BART train operator chats with a young patron as he awaits the computer's instructions to depart from the Montgomery Street station of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District's newly-opened Daly City line in San Francisco. This scene was on November 2, a heavy shopping day that saw all BART trains on the line jammed to capacity, with most riders apparently excursionists out to sample the new service on the partial holiday that traditionally opens the holiday shopping season. On that date BART extended service by two hours, to 10pm, with regular hours resuming Christmas Day. Photo by Message Media.

RTN WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER

With this issue, Peter Putnam Bretz joins Rail Travel Newsletter as Roving Correspondent. Peter lives in Malibu, California, that coastal suburb named after the Malibu Ranch that provided Southern Pacific with a barrier to construction, placing downtown Los Angeles in its present location instead of where Santa Monica now is. He has contributed a number of articles to RTN in the past, including his co-authorship with Ken Maylath of the big Mexico report featured in our First September Issue. We look forward to more of Peter's exciting rail essays.

CORRECTION:

The fare quoted in the Great Western Tours ad on page 16 should be $54 instead of $49.50.

INCREASE IN SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The yearly subscription rate of Rail Travel Newsletter will be increased from six dollars to seven dollars effective January 1, 1974. The single copy price will be increased from 25¢ to 30¢. We are sorry to be forced to make this change, which is necessitated by the upcoming increase in first class postage, as well as by inflationary production costs. Until the $7.00 rate takes effect, subscribers can still enter, renew or extend subscriptions at the old rate. Those subscribers who have already renewed for $7.00 will have four extra issues added to their renewal. All available back issues through the last issue of 1973 will continue to be priced at 25¢ postpaid.

Before your subscription expires we insert a renewal form in your copy of RTN. This is done several times before your subscription runs out. If your renewal order is not received, your last issue is stamped on the address label with a reminder that it is the last one.

When you move, if you notify the post office of your forwarding address, your copies of RTN are supposed to be forwarded. We find that sometimes the Postal Service goofs. To avoid delay, please send us your change of address as soon as possible, and we can usually make the change immediately. We constantly lose touch with some subscribers who move without leaving the post office a change of address notification. Then RTN is returned to us marked "Moved, left no address." Then we have no way of contacting the subscriber until he complains to us. It is not unknown to have copies returned to us so marked when the subscriber has not moved at all.

You can determine when your present subscription runs out by noting the highest number coded on your address label. That is the whole number of the last issue on your present subscription. This issue is whole number 72. The whole number is given in each issue at the bottom of this page.

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 3, No. 22 (Whole No. 72), Second Issue of November, 197
Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709.
Subscription $6.00 per year; single copy 25¢. STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Peter Putnam Bretz, Roving Correspondent; Doug Ellis, Staff Photographer. Scheduled mailing date for this issue: November 30, 1973.

THANKSGIVING FOR AMTRAK

Ken Maylath

As President Nixon announced new energy conservation measures on nationwide radio and TV, Amtrak was winding up what was obviously a big Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Concern over the energy crisis made it all the bigger, plus lowered speed limits in some places.

Amtrak announced at the start of the 4-day weekend that it was getting "every available coach out of mothballs" to handle the load. On Thanksgiving Day itself Amtrak received 27,000 calls at its nationwide reservations center, about 15,000 more than expected. Standing room only situations were common, especially in the Northeast Corridor. This was so even tho 800 additional car trips were laid on for the weekend.

Sunday after Thanksgiving is about as big a travel day as any of the year, and it may well have been years since Washington Union Station was as busy. Earlier estimates of 10-15% above 1972 were on the conservative side. For one thing, there is more service now in the Northeast Corridor. Amtrak's November 1971 timetable shows eight northbound departures from 3 thru 9pm on Sundays--four Metro and four conventional. The figure now is eleven--six Metro and five conventional.

My journey to Washington to check on travel conditions went without incident on the 1:56 Metro departure, which left Baltimore on time and arrived on time in the Capital. The heaviest was still to come, but nearly 200 detrained at the end of the line from the four cars. The Metros for the rest of the day were sold out.

Next I saw the southbound SILVER STAR, due out at 2:45 and leaving about on time. The 3pm northbound Metro also left without incident. I didn't attempt head counts on most of the Metros since they were filled anyway. Train 160, the MURRAY HILL for New York, had about 15 cars, loading from a lower level platform designed mostly for use by thru trains to the south but under Amtrak used for many Corridor departures as well. At least 500 poured down the stairs.

With the loads getting heavier, the timekeeping tended to get less reliable. The 3:34 Metro from New York didn't ease in until 3:50--but that was about as late as any Metro turned up while I watched. About the same time, the GEORGE WASHINGTON made its 3-hour late appearance, with a good number detraining. Right behind it was the northbound SILVER STAR, which arrived at 4:00, 25mins late. At least 100 detrained in Washington. Just after the STAR got in, the MERCHANTS LIMITED pulled out, again with a load in excess of 500. In the midst of all this activity, the 4pm Metro slipped out about on time.

Then there was nearly a half hour of breathing time before the BROADWAY LIMITED eased out at 4:35, just as the 4:30 Metro came in 5min late. The BROADWAY turned out to be the day's lightest train, receiving about 40 in its three cars. But then, the Washington section has never been a high capacity proposition. The count of 40 is at least ten more than I recall from the same date two years ago.

The 5pm Metro departure was a 6-car proposition headed for New Haven, meaning an even bigger crowd at that gate. The 5:05pm MONTREALER wasn't short of passengers, either. Again, at least 500--about the same as the MERCHANTS an hour earlier.

I did count the passengers leaving the 5:30 Metro arrival, which eased in eight minutes late--around 225. At this point I was still waiting to observe the arrival of the MINUTE MAN, due at 4:55. Originally posted at 5:35, it finally showed up at 6pm. The crowd poured up the stairs, and poured and poured for several minutes--about 800 strong. That's enough for a dozen coaches, even the high capacity kind normally used in the Northeast. The JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, due out at 5:50, was held for the connection and didn't get out till 6:20 as a result. Including those who made the transfer, its load out of Washington was 125-150.

Another brief breathing spell at this point as hundreds more lined up for the next set of departures. The 6:30 Metro from New York eased in at 6:45. As it was

(continued on page 18)

IMPRESSIONS OF THE NORFOLK & WESTERN

Pete Roehm

The weekend of November 3-4 was billed as the big autumn weekend on the N&W both east and west from Roanoke. One would be riding both mainlines (Virginian and N&W) behind soon-to-be-retired H 24-66 2400hp Trainmasters.

The weather would be just about perfect, I was told as our Piedmont 737 landed at the Roanoke airport on a dinner (sic) flight from LaGuardia. By 8:00 I was at the magnificent Hotel Roanoke, an edifice that has always been well situated for the railroad buff, whether his interest rested once in steam or today with diesel. I have heard that up to 30 trains per track move thru downtown Roanoke--and I believe it.

The equipment for the trip had been assembled at the former modern station Friday evening and consisted of Southern open-window coaches, an N&W generator baggage car, the open cars, "Missionary Ridge" and "Lookout Mountain," and two former N&W 500-series coaches, one in N&W red and the other in Pocahontas blue with the monogram on the side. My trips both days were spent in one car or the other of the N&W cars both of which were immaculate in exterior appearance and interior cleanliness. Some 600 would be riding both days with the heaviest patronage on Saturday westbound to the coal country. Over a dozen were in from Boston and the Northeast, but the vast majority were local Virginians out to see the hills and ride a train.

Saturday's train headed west over the original N&W main, passing the engine facilities at Shaffers Crossing, thence thru Salem and west on the 12-mile climb over Christianburg Mountain (792 feet) thence down thru the New River Valley for 38 miles toward Narrows, where the Virginian's power plant once stood. At Kellysville we go onto the former Virginian main and then climb 750 feet of steady 1.5% grade thru six tunnels and over six bridges on to Princeton, former Virginian car shops location. Thence along the old VGN New River Division past the new unused Black Lick trestle, once the highest such on the old VGN. We then paralleled the N&W's Pocahontas Division into Clarks Gap where a trestle is crossed at the 2524-foot summit of the Allegheny Mountains. Further on at Garwood Bridge we hold a photo stop. The bridge attaches to a tunnel for further effect, and curves onto the ledge across a deep ravine.

From here, downhill to Elmore and Mullens, West Virginia, terminus for this trip. Readers of Trains Magazine (Aug.) will recognize Mullens as the final working point for the N&W's remaining Trainmasters. Our two units were ex-Virginian and one had paint wearing thin enough to see Virginian yellow underneath, but the other was fresh in new N&W black with block NW insignia. Mullens, a town of about 3000, welcomed us with bands, dignitaries, and most of the town if not the county. Must have been the biggest thing to hit town since Aunt Ida got stuck in the two-seater during the last blizzard. There is an engine house here and several Geep units showed up later during our stay. Coal everywhere--certainly no problem of staying warm in this valley, energy crisis or not.

We shot back to Roanoke over the old Virginian main thru Ripplemead, Merrimac, Allegheny Tunnel (1 mile length), Salem, and into downtown Roanoke. The N&W and VGN trackage is excellent and the ride was glass smooth. Would that Amtrak could use this line! Once back at the hotel I elected to spend two hours until closing in that fabulous pool--what a way to relax! It is glass enclosed, like a greenhouse, with plants and background music and ample enough for several dozen swimmers.

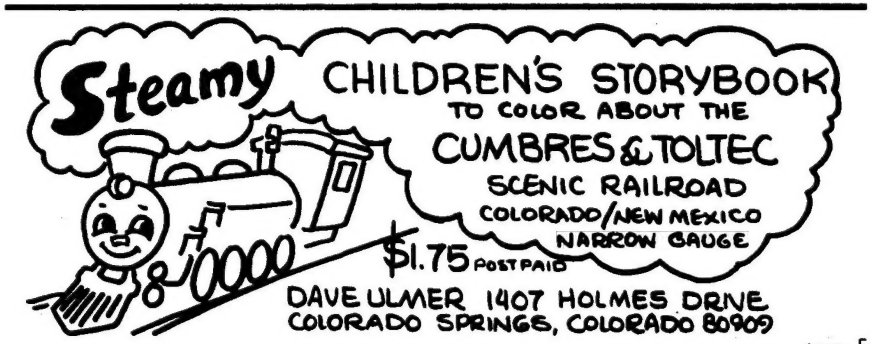
The weather Sunday was even better (hard to do) than Saturday, as we rolled eastbound past the Roanoke Shops to the former Virginian main line for the run

thru Moneta, Huddelsten, Altavista, to Abilene, Virginia. The road bed is again excellent, but the mountains are not so high nor so numerous as the line begins its descent over the piedmont region toward tidewater. At Abilene we switched to the Farmville Belt Line for more eastward running to Meherrin; the train is turned here and we retrace to Abilene thence to Pamplin Junction and join the N&W main for the westbound run via a stopover at Appomattox, Virginia.

In Appomattox it was Railroad Day. There were crafts, exhibits, refreshments, country, gospel, bluegrass, high school band, and rock music. All the folks were there. The N&W officially turned over the deed for the station to the town. Speeches, more music, a fast freight slowed to a crawl with people all over. We were there a good hour and a half. For Civil War buffs, this was where Lee let Grant have it all.

Then on to Lynchburg where several northbound fans would connect with the PIEDMONT for Washington. I would be connecting with a different Piedmont for Washington after a fast run, hitting 70 at times, to Roanoke. Again the roadbed was excellent and I spent much of this last leg in the "Lookout Mountain" just behind the engines. We really rolled toward home. And on time--even early. Went to the airport and caught Piedmont's YS-11 (only U.S. carrier flying them) for Washington where I would catch the NIGHT OWL and see some of my compatriots who had gone by way of Southern's PIEDMONT.

They'd arrived 15 minutes ahead of schedule as I was waiting at the Union Station gate for release to the coaches. Having a RTPC card I would use the coach to Boston, since it would cost me but thirteen dollars. I boarded one of the newly refurbished cars (it was too cool and would be cut at New York) and stayed thereon until New York, when the last two cars (the other was an ex-Chessie-B&O coach) were cut, leaving us two coaches, two sleepers, and one Santa Fe baggage car pulled by a dirty-black PC E-8 with an Amtrak number. The line south of Baltimore was quite rough, but the balance of the trip was not bad at all, and we poured it on after New London. Arrival at Providence was at 7:00, 25 minutes early (similar to Ken Maylath's trip--see last issue) and one could go into the station office for coffee and doughnuts free for the taking plus donation. The night before, the lounge had been selling to a long line and was open again about 6:00 for coffee and rolls. It was not the swivel seat car that Ken had spoken of. Many commuters like this train better than the regular one, but cannot use monthly commutation tickets on it, though they can use ten-ride and single ride tickets. Off from Providence and then despite a slow order or two we arrived right on time. Good trip, but those two coaches (both ex-NYC and not yet refurbished) need some upgrading, altho their ride was fairly comfortable.



TRAIN RIDING IS SUDDENLY RESPECTABLE AGAIN -- ENERGY CRISIS GIVES RAIL TRAVEL BOOST

The Thanksgiving holiday weekend just past may well represent the demarcation point at which travel by train was once again accepted as a normal means of transportation rather than the obsession of an eccentric few.

For the first time in many years, train travel was being mentioned by the media in a casual way, without explanation of why it has dwindled or why efforts are afoot to revive it--it was simply listed along with, and usually at the top of the list, of the various transportation modes in describing the efforts of holiday travelers to move about. Amtrak was mentioned often without identifying it as the "quasi-public corporation that operates the nation's passenger trains"; apparently the identification is no longer necessary.

The immediate reason for this turnabout is, of course, the energy crisis. Because of the shortage of fuel, people were turning to trains and buses, finding airlines cutting flights and gas for their automobiles in threat of short supply. In the San Francisco area, calls to Amtrak were up 40-50%, and the trains are sold out for most winter travel days, with long waiting lists accumulating. In a separate article, Ken Maylath describes the situation in the busy Northeast Corridor at the close of the Thanksgiving weekend.

On that Sunday night, Nov. 25, President Nixon went on nationwide TV and radio for his second address on the crisis this month. He called upon gasoline dealers to close their stations between 9pm Saturday and midnight Sunday on a voluntary basis beginning Dec. 1. When Congress passes the bill granting him emergency powers to deal with the fuel shortage, the closing will become mandatory. The aim is to reduce Sunday automobile travel and save gasoline. A maximum speed limit throughout the nation of 50 miles per hour is to be set, he said, with intercity buses and trucks allowed 55 because their gearing gives them greater efficiency at that speed. Jet fuel will be reduced in quantity by 15%, then gradually to 25%. An allocation system will be placed in effect that will reduce the amount of gasoline supplied to wholesalers and retailers by 15%. Other, largely voluntary steps were listed to cut back on home heating and lighting. An Energy Emergency Action Group under former Colorado Governor Love has been appointed by the President to deal with these matters.

The Administration's fuel allocation system was made public Nov. 27, and it placed "public-passenger surface transportation lines" in the highest priority category, along with fuel producers. These carriers would receive all the fuel they need. The announcement didn't clearly define these public carriers, but they evidently include mass transit bus lines and intercity rail and bus operations. Tour, recreation, and excursion services are, however, definitely excluded from the top category. This allocation program applies not to gasoline but to diesel fuel, heating oil and jet fuel.

Freeway congestion on the way out? The fuel shortage may finally pave the way for elimination of this vexing problem, as here on the San Bernadino Freeway. Photo by Paul Rayton.

Soon after the President's message, some oil companies announced voluntary compliance with the Dec. 1 Sunday closing--including Standard Oil of Ohio, Phillips Petroleum, and Shell Oil. A San Francisco newspaper surveyed gas stations in the area and found that very few were planning definitely to be open on Sundays. Lake Tahoe area merchants and resort owners are very worried about the Sunday closing and the fuel

shortage. (Two issues ago we reported on the opening of Amtrak service to Lake Tahoe; since then the automobile traffic question to the resort area has changed markedly.) The marketing manager for Squaw Valley ski area at Tahoe said, "Trains are out, because Amtrak in Washington says it can't lay on specials for skiers. The clubs might go to buses, but it's still unknown whether fuel would be allocated to them." At the time of the opening of Lake Tahoe service, there were no definite plans to improve bus connections from the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR to the lake, but now there may be more pressure to improve public transportation in the mountain resort area. At least a few steam engines may be pressed into service in the fuel crisis. The diesel fuel allocation for the Sierra Railway in California has reportedly been cut to 75% of normal, and a lumber company on the line must shift to rail freight because of cutbacks on diesel truck fuel, so the Sierra may use steam power for 25% of its increasing freight operations.

At least one cruise ship line, P&O, has canceled a 2-week cruise from the West Coast to Hawaii because of the energy crisis. The nation's airlines, led by United, the largest, are cutting back on flights and laying off personnel in the fuel crunch. United said it would lay off 950 employees beginning January 7 as it cancels 100 flights that month. American is furloughing 214 pilots January 2 because of flight cancellations. Delta has eliminated about 10% of its daily flights. Other airlines are doing likewise, and the industry is being critical of the handling of the fuel crisis.

Meanwhile, the political opposition says that Nixon has not moved far or fast enough on the energy question, and some Democratic leaders are calling for immediate gasoline rationing. Rationing is waiting in the wings while leaders watch the impact of voluntary cutbacks. It seems likely at this writing that rationing will be invoked later, probably with coupons that can be legally exchanged among individuals to avoid the black marketing of gas coupons that occurred in World War II.

The bill to re-establish Daylight Saving Time is moving ahead as of the writing, and the change in clocks will probably occur around Christmas.

The New York State Thruway authority announced it was banning gas sales in accordance with Nixon's request Dec. 1 at the 31 gas stations of the superhighway. In New Jersey, Turnpike stations will remain open weekends but limit automobile sales to 5 gallons. The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority said its stations will stay open.

One happy outcome of all this business is that California was able to announce after the Thanksgiving weekend that its holiday traffic deaths were at a record low. This was attributed to slower driving and fewer drivers. The nationwide death toll on the highways was 543, many fewer than the 625-725 forecast by the National Safety Council. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor said that a 50mph speed limit tends to reduce traffic congestion and crashes and should have a beneficial effect on highway conditions.

Meanwhile, European countries are also feeling the effects of reduced oil imports from the Arab nations. Six countries have already banned Sunday driving, and train travel is rising. Shortly, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, and Italy will all have driverless Sundays. The famous non-speed-limit German Autobahn got a speed limit for the first time--about 62mph, while other German highways have been cut back further.

While the energy crisis places hardships upon everyone, it is something of a bonanza for rail travel. However, train travelers can expect to experience much more difficulty in finding space aboard trains, and the relatively uncrowded conditions of Amtrak's first 2½ years may become something of a fond memory for regular train riders.

MILWAUKEE ROAD COMMUTER TRAIN COLLISION

Two Milwaukee Road commuter trains reportedly hit a gravel truck west of Bartlett, Illinois, around Thanksgiving. One train engineer and the truck driver were killed, and six injured. No date or further information is available atthis time.

EMPIRE SERVICE REVISISTED (AGAIN)

by Ken Maylath

Following a late winter journey from Rochester to New York via Amtrak's Empire Service, I wrote in RTN (Second April issue) "My primary impression after a ride across New York State is that little has been changed by Amtrak--especially when comparisons are made with other routes." I noted that trains were fewer, schedules slower and equipment the same compared with the time Amtrak took over the service from the Penn Central. And I said it was about time the NRPC improved equipment and food service.

More than six months later, it was time for a re-evaluation, especially in view of some indications of change for the better between New York and Buffalo. Those changes are exemplified by the arrival of the ex-SCL observation lounge cars on the scene from the West Coast, running on trains 71 and 78.

My excursion this time began at Croton-Harmon on a Saturday morning as train 71 rolled to a stop a couple minutes late. Ahead of observation car 3345 were three coaches, all refurbished, and a baggage car. Soon after we got rolling, I headed for the obvious place, the snack car. It had picked up a microwave oven during the refurbishing process, meaning that pre-frozen complete breakfast and dinners could be sold. The availability of tables in the forward section of 3345 helped matters too. Drinks could be purchased at the counter at the center of the car.

The place to be (after the snack) was in the rear, to watch the highlands of the Hudson unfold as we moved upriver. Shades of the old EMPIRE STATE EXPRESS. A goodly number were enjoying the facilities of 3345, especially since the Conductor made the slight extra effort to inform the passengers of its presence. After all, New York State passengers haven't been accustomed of late to such extras. The conductor noted that an off-season crowd of 125 boarded in New York, perhaps half the standing room only totals common on Saturday mornings during summer.

We remained several minutes late up the Hudson on the fairly tight scheduling over that division. A brief stop at Albany for passengers and crew change, then off again, still several minutes late. Moving on to the Mohawk Division, it became apparent that operating conditions have improved since my last trip. By the time of departure from Amsterdam we were on time. The run from there to Utica consumed 57 minutes, against a timetable allowance of 65. A group of cub scouts piled aboard there for a quick round trip to Syracuse--no doubt a first train ride for many if not most. From Utica to Syracuse we moved along smartly, coming into that division point, the end of my ride, six minutes before scheduled departure time. Track conditions along the Mohawk were fairly decent. Speeds were higher and running times better than on the occasion of my late winter sojourn. Indeed, I would say that the ten minutes added to Empire Service schedules a few months ago could easily be recaptured now on the Mohawk Division alone.

(continued on page 13)

ENERGETIC TRAINS

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A PRESS RELEASE BY AMTRAK NOV. 14
GIVING BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON TRAINS AND THE ENERGY CRISIS

Rail passenger service--because of its great efficiency and unique ability to use many kinds of fuel--is destined to play an increasingly important role in America's transportation system as the nation faces a long-term fuel crisis.

And Amtrak, America's intercity rail passenger service, is making preparations to carry far more passengers if fuel shortages are as great as anticipated this winter.

When President Nixon signed on Nov. 3 a bill authorizing more funds for Amtrak, he said it is in the national interest to encourage Americans to choose a train when they make travel plans. "Railroads can carry more passengers over greater

distances per gallon of fuel than automobiles or airlines are able to do, while adding fewer pollutants to our air," he stated. The President added, "With our oil resources becoming increasingly precious, not just this winter but for some years ahead, the energy efficiency of rail travel is an especially compelling argument for expansion of appropriate Federal assistance to Amtrak."

For its high-speed turbotrains, Amtrak has fuel contracts valid through May, 1974. The remaining fuel is provided by the operating railroads.

Amtrak's diesel locomotives and turbine-powered trains use fuel oil, less costly and less highly refined than automobile gasoline, and consume less than half as much fuel per passenger mile as a fully loaded automobile and less than 20 per cent as much fuel per passenger mile as a jet airliner.

Even more favorable from an energy standpoint are Amtrak's electric-powered trains which operate in the densely populated Northeast Corridor. Nearly half of all Amtrak's passengers ride in trains which can derive their energy from coal, water, or atomic power as well as from liquid fuels.

No other form of transportation offers as much potential in efficient use of energy and land as the high-speed passenger train. It also has low pollution benefits. A single railroad track can handle 40,000 passengers an hour, while one highway lane can handle only about 1,200 passenger cars an hour.

Amtrak's Current Fleet

The equipment currently owned or leased by Amtrak included over 1900 cars, mostly hauled by locomotives. Of that number, over 1400 cars are used in service everyday. Of the remaining 500, 200 are being renovated or awaiting renovation and 300 are undergoing routine repairs.

"We're working around the clock to repair our equipment and get it in serviceable order before the Thanksgiving rush," said Robert Hopkins, Amtrak's General Manager-Operations. He indicated that the out-of-service ratio would be greatly reduced by the peak-travel holiday period, and said Amtrak is obtaining additional maintenance personnel in a number of cities.

A major factor in Amtrak's ability to meet its future requirements is new equipment, and hundreds of new locomotives and cars are on order or in final stages of design. Last summer, Amtrak took delivery of 40 high-horsepower diesel locomotives from the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors, and another 110 are to be delivered by July 1974. Another 41 diesel locomotives are being completely rebuilt, and will alsobe ready by next summer. The new, higher-horsepower units will be 20 to 25 per cent more efficient in fuel use than the ones they replace. By late next year, 26 new electric locomotives will be operating between New Haven, New York, Washington and Harrisburg, Pa., replacing existing locomotives that average over 30 years in age.

Amtrak is currently operating two United Aircraft Turbo-Trains between New York and Boston, and will add a third early next year. Two French-built turbine trains went into service last month between St. Louis and Chicago, and Amtrak has options on eight additional French turboliners.

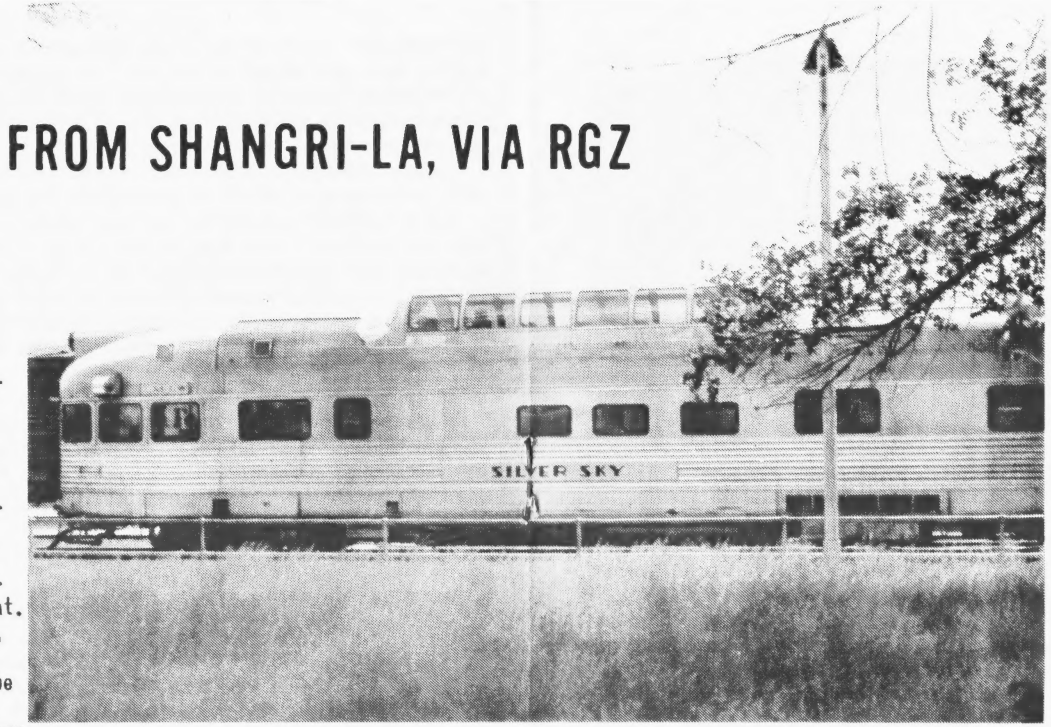
New passenger cars are also on order. Amtrak will receive 57 new Metroliner-type cars from the Budd Company, starting in early 1975, for use in the Northeast Corridor. In addition, Amtrak has received two proposals for long-distance, advanced equipment, and intends to place orders for at least 100 cars early next year.

Amtrak carried over 17 million passengers last year, while operating its nationwide fleet at an average of less than half full. Thus, the overall passenger load could be greatly increased with addition of relatively little equipment. At peak times, however, such as during vacation and holiday periods, Amtrak's equipment fleet is taxed to the limit.

The greatest ability for expansion of service lies in the relatively short intercity corridors, where traffic is most dense. Here the great flexibility of the train lies in its ability to carry more cars simply by adding them onto the existing trains, and Amtrak plans to do this wherever possible.

by Glenn Lee

WITHDRAWING FROM SHANGRI-LA, VIA RGZ



Paul Rayton photographed the RGZ with its rear observation car, "Silver Sky," last May 29 as it waited in the station at Grand Junction, Colorado.

Friends had come from Denver to visit for a day during my vacation in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. I'd verbalized enthusiastically about Glenwood, and as we left the hot mineral pools with their small son, he turned and asked, "This is your Shangri-La, isn't it?" I'd never thought of Glenwood Springs as such, but upon musing, said: "Yes, it probably is." Having a good time in the warm, crystal clear days of the 1973 Indian summer, longest in living memory, seemed to make Glenwood just that.

But vacations, like Indian summers, must come to an end, and it was with much melancholy that I appeared at the Rio Grande station platform the last Monday in October, watching winter come closer by the minute while waiting for the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR to appear. Today would be the only day during my stay I would regret seeing the RGZ arrive. Glenwood had been such a pleasant, beautiful and quiet place that I hated to go. Indeed, most of the noise in Glenwood had been the trains, and that isn't really noise at all, is it?

On time to the minute, the westbound 4-car RGZ arrived, pulled by two yellow F units. It included combine 1231, dome coach "Silver Colt," diner "Silver Banquet," and dome-sleeper-lounge-observation "Silver Sky." Altho the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR nameplates have been removed from the cars, this is still the lively curtain call for the greatest train of them all.

We pulled out under threatening skies, and immediately rolled onto ex-Colorado Midland right of way. The old D&RGW line west of Glenwood was taken for the new I-70 freeway, and RGZ follows the Midland route to Chacra, about eight miles west, and then returns to the "real" D&RGW alignment. West of Rifle, where the chamber of commerce has an

office in an ex-Rio Grande coach near the depot, RGZ was stuck for its first freight meet. We arrived at the west switch of the Rifle siding as an eastbound freight passed Dos siding, some 11 miles west, stabbing us 15 minutes. But we made up some time, as the next two eastward freights were in sidings when RGZ passed.

As RGZ plunged westward, a swirling cold front passed thru the area, and gale force winds pummeled canyon and plateau, and were howling strong when RGZ emerged into the flat fruit belt east of Grand Junction. About half the passenger load of 40 on at Denver was standing in the aisles as RGZ pulled into the Grand Junction station, or should we say, to a spot two blocks west of the station (so that the engines would be spotted directly at fueling facilities).

The passengers didn't like this at all. I stood behind the crowd waiting my turn to get off and heard several hostile comments about the Rio Grande: "This is silly. They do it on purpose. Ridiculous. There must be a reason for it. This is too far to walk to the depot. They just don't want it to be convenient." A number of elderly people with bags found it a problem making their way thru the wind back to the depot, and I offered to carry some bags.

The Grand Junction depot is an enthusiastic place, still reeking of passenger positivism. On the wall above the main street entrance, a glass map outlines Rio Grande passenger routes (as they were in the 1950s) with main lines shown by illuminated red tubing. Some of the tubing has burned out, never to be replaced, I'm afraid. To the west of the depot, however, the desert is reclaiming its own. The beautiful little park, well remembered by many years of CZ passengers, has been abandoned by the company, and lawn and trees are unkempt and dying.

After buying a Silverton train bag from the ticket agent, I walked the two blocks back to the train, finding the wind even chillier than five minutes earlier. Before the afternoon was out, snow would be swirling briefly around our RGZ.

West from Grand Junction, the passenger load had dropped to 15, but it was a close and friendly group as darker weather closed in to mark our entry into the spectacle of Ruby Canyon. Away from the highway, and hauntingly backlighted by the outriders of the storm, this faraway place seemed remote and quiet, almost an inspiration to conversation. Soon we were at Westwater, where the track turns away from the river and climbs the desert plateau toward Thompson, Utah. Westwater had been the starting point for a number of Colorado River-Grand Canyon explorations in the 1800s, and was today to be the beginning of a stunning experience in desert beauty for me.

As we lugged up the grade from Westwater, the approaching storm sent a tongue of snow lashing by us. Then to the south, flashes of lightning as the cold front embraced the La Salles, a tall mountain range already sporting a light talcum crust of snow. But, in a matter of minutes, the dark clouds drew back, and we could see perhaps 50 miles or more south into the northern reaches of the canyonlands. As the setting sun dropped below the cold cloud cover, it illuminated the spires and towering ramparts of the canyonlands in brilliant golds and dark reds.

That great tower: is it the stack of a smelter? No! It is a wind-rounded chimney of rock, hundreds of feet tall! Other battlements and arches shown proudly thru the wind and setting sun, undaunted that their privacy had been split by the weather and the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR. I watched, almost hypnotized, as RGZ climbed toward Thompson.

The RGZ rolled thru Thompson without stopping. No business. And then rolled onto the recently relocated downgrade, as the sun began dropping behind the distant Roberts Roost badlands area. Gradually we came under the close domination of the Book Cliff range to the

The Rio Grande railroad station at Grand Junction, Colorado. Photo by Paul Rayton.

north that vaguely resembles the Egyptian Sphinx. The Utah "Sphinx" is perhaps hundreds of times larger, but the desert setting is similar.

A deadheading Rio Grande brakeman was as intriguing as the scenery. He recounted life, times and hi-jinks on the old Uintah Railway; and also on the new Rio Grande spurs, such as the one to Potash, south of the main line. This talkative brakeman fired up some sympathetic vibration in a retired Rio Grande employee, well into his 70s. The oldtimer had begun working for the Rio Grande at age 14, before World War I, as a crew-call boy. He remembered moving to the Utah Coal Route during strikes in the 1920s, so as not to "scab" on the Rio Grande. The oldtimer's father had been a longtime Rio Grande man, and recalled that Butch Cassidy had once rolled into Green River, Utah, and had shot up the town, including the Rio Grande facilities. "Cassidy sure made a mess of it," said the oldtimer.

To the west, the great pyramid dominating the Roberts' Roost badlands grew taller, and we heard about Cassidy's exploits in this fearful looking region. "That range looks like a big-city skyline," said the oldtimer's wife. And she was right. We could have been gazing at downtown San Francisco for a moment or two before darkness fell.

As Jupiter, Saturn and Mars rolled brightly over the darkened and vacant desert, I moved to the diner, feeling sated on scenery and lore. Because I thought this might be my last meal in a diner run by a private railroad, I ordered the $7.15 steak dinner. High, I thought, but upon finishing, well worth it. The crews are not reluctant to tell inquiring passengers that the RGZ will be coming off in summer, 1975, so eat, drink, and be merry, for gang --tomorrow it may be abandoned!

I finished dinner in a mostly empty, but strangely pleasant car, as we passed thru Price, on time. Then only a short hop to Helper, where on-time performance was to become but a memory. First there was a steam generator problem; then some heavy company freight had to be loaded into the baggage section of the combine. "What's the matter? You tryin' to tip my coach over?" asked the conductor as a company truck had a tough time backing over open rails getting up to the car. Due out at 6:30pm, we rolled at 6:46, and promptly we found RGZ crawling uphill behind a long and slow Utah Coal Route coal drag.

We were stopped 7-7:10pm, then got underway again very slowly. At 7:31pm an eastbound freight rolled by. From 7:40-7:48 RGZ was again stopped, and then moved to the eastbound main. At 8pm, about 45 minutes late, we finally passed the slow and lugging Coal Route train, drawn by white Alco switchers.

The night grew blacker as we crossed Soldier Summit, as if every light in the world had been turned out except those on RGZ. After dropping thru the big reverse curves, we moved into the canyons of the Wahsatch Range, and picked up speed, but to no avail. Arrival at Provo was 51 minutes late; and those of us bound for the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR at Ogden began to worry. Would we pick up time? Would Amtrak hold for us?

Tensions rose as RGZ encountered some aggravating and frustrating red block signals south of Salt Lake, and we finally pulled into the Utah Capital City at 10:23pm, 53 minutes late. We walked in slow awe thru the minor temple that is the Rio Grande station, and into the limousine provided by Rio Grande since the Salt Lake-Ogden portion of the RGZ run was unilaterally halted, by permission of no agency, in direct violation of the Amtrak Act of 1970.

There were five of us: myself, two girls escaping a Mexican restaurant in Denver for a trip to Mexico via San Francisco; and a young married couple en route to U.S. civil service jobs in Thailand. We quickly became old friends, and a minor party ensued, much to the amusement of the limousine driver; and we arrived in Ogden just before we would have begun singing college drinking and football fight songs!

I recalled an earlier trip to Ogden courtesy of Rio Grande. In the fall of 1970, RGZ was still a part of BN's "California Service," and had been 4½ hours late at Helper, westbound. SP would in 1970 hold the CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO at Ogden up to four hours, but not 4½. Instead, on my trip, the CITY left Ogden on time and SP provided a charter Greyhound scenicruiser for Bay Area passengers, leaving me, en route to Ogden, as the only passenger on the ZEPHYR north from Salt Lake. A friend from Logan, Utah, who was to meet me in Ogden, missed, and inquired of the station agent. "Yes, we had a passenger. Yes, I saw the passenger tonight" and the agent's description had helped track me down, way back in 1970.

But tonight in 1973 the Ogden station was buzzing with activity. The westbound SFZ was late, and altho my reservation request had never reached the Ogden agent, I had no trouble getting a roomette. "You're in luck, you know" said the agent. "We don't hold here for the Rio Grande anymore."

Luck, to be sure, I thought. Could there be anything but luck while withdrawing from Shangri-La, across the canyons and mountains, in this fabled train, thru a fabled land? It was at least luck, and probably a lot more!

EMPIRE SERVICE (continued from page 8)

Train 78 picked me up after a wait of nearly two hours in Syracuse. It departed about 10 minutes late--apparently after a tardy departure from Buffalo caused by the late arrival of the Toronto connection. (Someone commented that it had been delayed every day that week.) On a Saturday afternoon No. 78 carried just two coaches, one of them refurbished and the other a non-refurbished snack coach. Car 3341 graced the end of the consist this time. Not surprisingly, the passenger count on a Saturday afternoon was somewhat lower. We gathered speed out of the PC's DeWitt Yard as the late afternoon sun reflected off a light covering of early season snow.

No problem making up those lost minutes as we clicked along. Several were recovered by the time we left Utica, and we were back on the beam at Amsterdam. Indeed, we had to wait several minutes for time at Colonie and arrived at Albany with five minutes to spare, giving us a full 15 minutes there. This gave me the opportunity to watch train 75 arrive right on time, then continue on its way to Syracuse.

At one minute past 7:00 we began moving again and headed down the Hudson River in the autumn darkness to an on-time arrival at Croton-Harmon, where electric power takes over for the last 33 miles into New York City.

Improvement? A lot since the time of my previous trip. It's not just the plus of the observation cars, but the large percentage of refurbished coaches and snack cars now operating on Empire Service trains. On-time arrivals this time contrasted with a run that was an hour or more behind from Syracuse to New York before. Track conditions and speed were about the same along the Hudson, and noticeably improved on the Mohawk Division. At last, New York State passengers seem to be enjoying some of the improvements made by Amtrak on most other routes around the nation.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"There is no question that the railroads use less energy for the amount of service provided than any other modes of transportation. At this critical time when we face a possibility of fuel rationing, it is disheartening to see just how underutilized the railroads are. The President noted recently when he signed legislation providing new funds for Amtrak that we must make better use of our railroads. A fully loaded passenger train uses only about 70 percent of the energy needed for fully loaded automobiles with the same number of seats. And that passenger train can carry 1,200 people with no trouble at all."

--Federal Railroad Administrator John W. Ingram, Nov. 14

"A nation with 6% of the world's population could not expect indefinitely to get away with sopping up 30% of the world's energy fuels. It is the lopsided demand, the unrestrained consumption of petroleum--caused particularly by the priority given the private automobile over mass transit--that is the real cause of the crisis, not the delay in getting North Slope oil or the environmentalists' tentative success in curbing destruction of the nation's waters and the fouling of its air."

--New York Times editorial, Nov. 25

Urban-Suburban Transit

OUR COVER PHOTO of a BART train taken Nov. 23 came on the highest-patronage day yet for the transit system. BART announced that 110,262 passengers rode that busy Friday, with 58,030 of them on the San Francisco-Daly City line...

BOSTON'S TRANSIT SYSTEM has just announced an experimental plan for issuing prepaid pass cards next year for certain groups such as students and employees of state and some large companies. The aim is to speed up the flow of passengers and increase revenues. The pass cards would activate turnstyle systems...

MORE COMPANIES ARE subsidizing the commute costs of their employees. Among them are the Colorado National Bank, where over 50% of the workers have half their bus fare paid if they leave their cars at home. Atlantic Richfield runs nine buses for Los Angeles employees and pays much of the cost. The University of California at Berkeley, in conjunction with BART, has received a grant to buy small Mercedes-Benz diesel shuttle buses to transport riders free from the Berkeley BART station to the campus. The experimental service should begin next year...

ELEVEN "NEW" STREETCARS, purchased from Toronto, arrived in San Francisco Nov. 26, having been transported via SP. Since San Francisco's track is wider gauge than Toronto's, the vehicles must be outfitted with new trucks before being used. About the first of next year they should be ready to roll. The San Francisco Chronicle has begun a series of critical review articles on the San Francisco Muni Railway. More on a future issue...

NEW YORKERS MAY have to face a 60¢ MTA fare instead of the present 35¢ in January, warns William J. Ronan, chairman of the transit authority, unless some source of funds to meet a $300 million deficit is found. The failure of the New York bond issue in early November left the deficit up in the air...

CHICAGO AREA COMMUTERS found 8-10% fare increases on Burlington Northern trains on Nov. 19. As an example, the present Chicago-Aurora fare of $40 monthly went to $44...

CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY leaders late this month reached agreement with suburban commuter lines on formation of a regional transit authority to provide $171 million to help the CTA's present deficit. CTA fare will be cut from 45¢ to 25¢ during rush hours, and funds will be available for operating subsidies for six commuter rail operations...

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MAYORS along the uncompleted Century Freeway route rejected a proposal to use funds earmarked for the superhighway to build a rapid transit system instead...

mixed train of thoughts

RAIL PASSENGER SERVICE may resume next summer between the Twin Cities and Duluth. State officials are working with Amtrak to try to get the service going, with the state of Minnesota paying partial reimbursement of deficits. The Governor of Minnesota reportedly may also ask Amtrak to study the possibility of a Twin Cities-Winnipeg service..... AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION is said to be exploring possibilities for a new Chicago-Denver route..... THE ALASKA RAILROAD has had an offer from the manager of Liquid Air in Anchorage to buy the federally-owned road for $100 million ..... NORTHEAST TRANSPORTATION COALITION is pushing a plan to restore Boston-Chicago train service. Congress and Amtrak will be asked to revamp two existing runs thru Massachusetts and initiate service to Chicago via Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland and Toledo. This would be initiated under Amtrak's experimental category. The new Amtrak bill requires the corporation to begin one new experimental service yearly... THE COLORADO ASSOCIATION of Railroad Passengers will hold a meeting Dec. 5 to discuss the need for expanded Amtrak passenger service to Colorado in light of the energy crisis. The meeting will feature a talk by Joseph Vranich, Amtrak Passenger Service Supervisor in Denver and formerly of NARP, entitled "Amtrak trains--A way to save the environment and promote tourism"..... EVERYBODY WANTS AMTRAK trains in their area, it seems. The mayors of Ashland and Medford, Oregon want passenger trains back in the Rogue River Valley, and the Oregon Legislature will study the possibility. Meanwhile, the Willows, Calif., Daily Journal has editorialized in favor of better train service to Butte County, including a stop at Orland and rescheduling service on the COAST STARLIGHT route so Sacramento Valley stops won't be at such "ungodly hours"..... CHICAGO SUN-TIMES re-ran the famous Mauldin cartoon of 1969 last Nov. 18, showing the "Sleeping Giant" high-speed passenger train under cobwebs while jets roared overhead..... HARRY C. JOHNSTON is new Western Regional Manager for Amtrak, headquartered in Los Angeles. He is former Assistant General Passenger Traffic Manager in Los Angeles for Santa Fe..... THE RIO GRANDE is continuing its program to eliminate sidings on its main line, reducing the capacity of its system, as well as its capability of moving passengertrains. Latest siding to be removed is Verde, in the zone west of Green River, Utah. To complaints by train crews, Rio Grande management replies that it can no longer afford the taxes on the signals and switch machines of the CTC equipment involved.....

* * *

MILWAUKEE ROAD PRESIDENT William Quinn has been asked by Senator Warren G. Magnuson of Washington, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, to halt the railroad's program to dismantle its electrical overhead and plant because of the worsening oil shortage. Rumors are flying that (1) Milwaukee Road will soon try to halt all electric operation on its 440-mile Montana Division, two years ahead of schedule; (2) Burlington Northern, with which Milwaukee would like to merge, is also trying to halt the wire removal program..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION late in November approved the Southern Railway's acquisition of the Norfolk Southern Railway..... AIRLINE FARES ARE going up because of the fuel shortage. On Dec. 1 a 5% increase for the major airlines is to take effect. Reports are that by January some fares may be 20% above the year-earlier levels and that more increases will come in 1974..... "THE FUTURE OF rail-passenger service in the U.S. is brighter than it was a few years ago," says U.S. News & World Report magazine in a Nov. 19 article, "Amtrak's fresh lease on life." In one of its periodic reviews of the rail travel scene, the magazine summarizes the results of President Nixon's signing of the Amtrak Improvement Act. It says that Amtrak's auto-ferry service on the FLORIDIAN should get underway "before the middle of 1974"..... GREYHOUND IS COMPLAINING about lower speed limits, saying they will have a "disastrous effect" on bus schedules. In a widely publicized report on Thanksgiving Day, 40 bus passengers from Spokane, WA to Portland, OR spent 6 hours in a bus depot when their bus driver went off duty because he couldn't reach his destination in time due to low highway speeds.....

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POSTSCRIPT TO THE 759

by Pete Roehm

Following Ken Maylath's report on the 759 trip (see last issue), I should like to add a few words. There were only 350 or so passengers aboard the nine ex-CNJ coaches, and this was a good bit due to the steep $50 ticket. It didn't deter some: the Boston Globe reports that a 71-year-old Herbert Sterms drove all the way from Los Angeles for the trip! In any event, I and a young companion, David Foley, settled down in our vintage coach which seemed to fit in well with an old New England steam ride thru the mountains, for the two-day jaunt. Ken's observations from Boston north can fill this space, but I will add that his notation of poor track north of Concord is the result of the B&M's desire to abandon that line from Concord to White River Junction.

During our layover at White River we found the newly refurbished station (by the Vermont Ass'n of Railroad Passengers) quite attractive and the agent was doing a land-office business in selling Amtrak travel bags for four bucks. They were sold out, altho one could send to Amtrak for them.

Once 759 was cut off at Montpelier Junction and the heat departed, we passengers nearly froze to death waiting for the Montpelier & Barre to take us downtown from where there was one massive dispersal to motels in Montpelier, Barre, and Waterbury. Unfortunately, the chamber of commerce had failed to notify the restaurants of the upsurge in local tourists and most were well pressed to serve customers and many railfans skipped breakfast altogether after waiting up to an hour for non-existent service. They would be rewarded at nearby Northfield when the coaling stop was made.

Taking coal at Northfield resulted in the failure of someone to check and determine that no electrical outlet existed at Montpelier Junction so that a conveyor could be used that night. The train had brought a hopper car with it on the tail end from Boston and would now haul it to Northfield. A sort of mixed train in reverse. But--at Northfield the rather fragile conveyor immediately broke down and a hand operation would take the better part of three hours. And it did and this allowed time for every resident throughout the county to come by including a good share of the cadets from the Norwich Military Academy. A home bakery just across the street was soon eyed by those hungry passengers and by noon it had been wiped clean.

The run back was more or less routine but getting later all the while. Two photo runbys were set up in Vermont and one required the services of a cooperative Highway Patrol to keep autos from running over photographers. The VHP also did some business that weekend with train chasers who consistently crossed yellow double lines and pulled other fast ones. I saw several pulled over. And I am to understand that crossing a double yellow is worth quite a bit to the state's coffers.

The run from the Junction south remained warm in temperature but with the darkening skies came darkening cars as there were no lights--from Concord south it was all dark. The Boston Sunday Globe ran an excellent front page center shot of 759 blasting out of North Station with a follow-up comment on page 3 on Monday. The Herald American offered some space and the TV news films were excellent--I am told--I missed seeing them due to a late arrival of my B&M RDC from Boston to Rockport caused by 759's late arrival from the north.

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THANKSGIVING FOR AMTRAK (continued from page 3)

discharging, the gate was opening to receive passengers for the NEW YORKER, at 7:05. Again more than 500 thru the gate. There was, of course, the 7pm Metro too.

By now the gate was open for the SOUTHERN CRESCENT--at least for the equipment originating in Washington. It was delayed by the late arrival of the connection from New York. At least 150 boarded. At 7:05, about 15min late, the SILVER METEOR, southbound, came in, with a large crowd of over 150 boarding. Many were from a special party. It left at 7:25, just 10 minutes late. As it was leaving, the SOUTHERN CRESCENT, at least the first section, originating in New York, made its appearance. As huge as the group from the MINUTE MAN was, this was a little bigger--I'd say at least 850. The second section, from Boston, got in exactly one hour late, at 6:55, and disgorged a mere 550 or 600. And in there also the arrival of the 7:33 Metro less than 5min late. Another virtually on-time arrival was the little BLUE RIDGE, at 7:35, with about 75 passengers.

The CHAMPION eased in at 8:05--15 late, with a somewhat smaller group boarding than was the case with the METEOR. Something less than 75. Shortly after its departure, the 8:30 Metro arrived, about 5min late.

It was time for my departure, on the Sunday-only NIGHT CAP. I anticipated that this would be less of a mob scene, and it was. Apparently most travelers wanted to start home before 9pm. About 200 boarded with me--plenty of room in the 8 coaches. We pulled out two minutes late, but had no difficulty in reaching Baltimore on time, including a stop at Capital Beltway. On the way, the southbound STATESMAN flashed by, apparently in two lengthy sections. Both were somewhat late. Coming thru West Baltimore the CHESAPEAKE was seen, and it was on time.

A check of the train board in Baltimore showed my 9:49 Metro 10min late and the SENATOR 45 behind.

Some final observations of the end of this frantic weekend: several Amtrak men were seen in Union Station helping to coordinate activities. On the minus side was the breakdown of the closed circuit TV system which displays train arrivals and departures--that between 5 and 6pm. The PA system was not used to take up the slack, at least for train arrivals, which were late in some cases.

WHY NIXON SIGNED THE AMTRAK BILL--ANOTHER VIEW

The United Transportation Union has reported, in its publication UTU News, that President Nixon signed the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973 last November 3 because he discovered that there were enough votes in Congress to override the veto recommended by his cabinet. In addition, the UTU said that unions played a major role in his decision to sign. The Congress of Railway Unions and the Railway Labor Executives' Association sent Nixon a messaged Nov. 2 urging him to sign because of the "overriding factor" of the fuel shortage.

RESTORATION OF MORE SERVICE ON SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILS IS URGED

Speaking to the Davis, Calif., Chamber of Commerce in mid-November, Mr. Glenn Lee, transportation planner in Seattle, made some recommendations that are not likely to set well with the SP. (Mr. Lee, a leader of the opposition to SP passenger train downgrading before Amtrak, is the person whom the California Aggie, U. of Calif., Davis, newspaper referred to in 1968 as being verbally threatened by SP president B.F. Biaggini that he would like to have Lee shot; Biaggini was reportedly ired over Lee's earlier reporting in that newspaper that the SP is "the crookedest outfit in the country.") Mr. Lee called for restoration of passenger train service between Sacramento and Oakland, with 5 trains daily in each direction and a bus connection to San Francisco. He outlined three ways this could be done: by partial state subsidy, by persuading congressmen to qualify the route for an "experimental" system under the 1973 Amtrak bill, or by supporting Sen. Claiborne Pell's National Railroad Transportation Corridor Bill, which includes the route and 14 other corridors.

canadian news letter

THE ENERGY SHORTAGE in Canada is apparently less severe than in the U.S., according to a Wall Street Journal report. Western Canada has a great deal of oil, and much of this is exported to the U.S. Eastern Canada is expected to have a power shortage this winter, and the problem is moving oil from west to east. Canada's minister of energy, Donald Macdonald, called upon Canadians Nov. 26 to voluntarily cut down usage of all kinds of energy in preparation for harder times this winter. There may be severe shortages in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces. He asked Canadians to lower highway speed limits to 50mph, and told the nation that gasoline prices would be increasing 4 or 5 cents a gallon Dec. 1. He spoke of legislation to be considered that would form an Energy Supplies Allocation Board to ration fuel next year if necessary.

CANADIAN NATIONAL ELIMINATED pre-paid meals for sleeping car and parlor car passengers effective Nov. 1, following an earlier similar move by CP Rail. This tends to raise substantially the cost of a transcontinental sleeping car trip on CN's SUPER CONTINENTAL. The move had been rumored for some time.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, Hydro system has purchased approximately 15 trolley buses from the Saskatoon, Sask. transit system, which is gradually phasing out the electric vehicles. Vancouver will add the electrics to various existing routes to help accommodate rapidly increasing patronage.

ON THE MONDAY before the U.S. Thanksgiving holiday, CP Rail's "Carrier Princess," substituting for the "Princess of Vancouver" now in drydock for refit, ran into some rough weather on the Vancouver-Nanaimo crossing, resulting in some damage to trucks on her open deck, and heavy delays to the schedule.

THE PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, Amtrak's Seattle-Vancouver train, is showing good patronage these days. On Nov. 21, the day before Thanksgiving, it was observed being held for a good crowd connecting from the northbound COAST STARLIGHT at Seattle. The latter train got in 35mins late (at 5:55pm) with 17 cars, including 9 coaches and 3 sleepers, and required almost 15 minutes to unload. The NORTH COAST HIAWATHA was also held for the connection, and it was fully loaded with three coaches and two sleepers (one car in the consist was BN 3480, formerly "Silver Castle," the second dome car built in the U.S.).

THE FUEL SHORTAGE has threatened the end of all Washington State to Sidney, B.C., ferry service. It has already forced the state to lay up two of its newest superferries, replacing them with two ex-SP ferries built in 1927 on San Francisco Bay. The 8500hp "Walla Walla," built in 1973, has been replaced by the "Klickitat" (ex-"Stockton") and the 8000hp "Kaleetan" has been sent to layup by the "Illahee" (ex-"Lake Tahoe").

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S GOVERNMENT, following debate, has decided to construct 3 large new ferries for Lower Mainland-Vancouver Is. service, to be delivered by summer, 1975. Two 457-foot auto ferries, both double-enders, will be built for Vancouver-Nanaimo service. They'll cost $13 million apiece. A 440-foot truck & trailer ferry will operate on the Tawassen-Swartz Bay (Victoria) run. The new Nanaimo boats will operate to a terminal to be constructed on Gabriola Is., cutting the crossing to 50 minutes (CP Rail's "Princess of Vancouver," on a longer route, will take 2 hrs, 20 mins after her refit). The Tawassen boat, to cost $9 million, will be in direct competition with CP Rail's new "Carrier Princess" which went on that run in May, 1973.

CP'S WINDSOR STATION, the 85-year old Montreal headquarters of the railroad, has lost its bid for national historic site status, and is headed for demolition in a CP redevelopment project.

TORONTO TRANSIT STUDY recommends electric commuter train system for the lakeshore area to supplement the GO Train operation. Proposed name: Super GO.